

MERCATOR:

OR,

Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British Trade*, &c.

From Tuesday, May 4. to Thursday, May 6. 1714.

*The Trade to France by the Port of Marseilles confirm'd.**The Absurdity of the Opposers Pretences, farther Opposed.**The Ports in the Streights stated and divided.**The Porportion to Marseilles calculated.**The Reason of these Things debated.**The Impossibility then of having a true Account of the Trade from the Books of the Custom-house.**All the Schemes and Accounts drawn from those Books, and hitherto made the Opposer's Boast, are sunk in this one Article, viz. that they cannot be true.**The Custom-house Books do not give an Account of above half our Exportation to France, but of all our Importation from it.**All this is calculated exactly for the Occasion of the Opposers.*

THE MERCATOR has been shewing the Absurdity of that Notion, which the Opposers would fain have put into Peoples Heads, viz. that the City of Marseilles being a free Port, the Woollen-Manufactures which are sent thither from England are only sent as to a common Ware-house to be from thence shipped again to all parts of the World to which the French Trade.

1. This cannot be rational, for that there are no such Ports where we do not or cannot come directly with the same Goods, which consequently would be sold cheaper at Market than those sent from Marseilles, and it would be very ridiculous to think that the French could have our own Goods first carry'd to Marseilles, landed, housed, shipped again, and then carry'd to another Market or Port, and sold there cheaper than we could sell them at the same Port, carrying them directly from England; it is also as ridiculous to think, that the French could sell our Goods at all, if we were selling the same Sorts of Goods at the same Market, at a lower Price; so that to fancy that the French carry our Goods from Marseilles to other Ports for Sale, must be to imagine there are some Ports in the Mediterranean to which the French Ships Trade, and ours do not, and the MERCATOR would be glad to know what Ports they are, and where situate, and how it comes to pass that the French have a Trade thither, and the English have not, and how long it has been so? As to Ports out of the Mediterranean, the MERCATOR supposes they will not talk of them, when we are speaking of Goods going to Marseilles first.

2. But supposing now for Argument sake, not at all granting that the French Merchants at Marseilles did Import our Woollen-Manufactures there, as into a common Warehouse to be Exported again, and not to be carry'd into, or thro' France; what then is become of

the Argument, of which so much Noise has been made? viz. That the French are able to supply the World with their own Woollen-Manufactures, that they make them as good and sell them cheaper than we can do, and that they bid fair to Engross all the Trade of Europe. This they have boasted of along time, and even Insulted us upon it, as if it had been absurd not to believe it: Whereas now on a sudden they have made the French turn Factors and Brokers to us; and buying our Goods first, carry them abroad to other Markets to sell them for us, which if they have any of their own could never be imagin'd.

It is really matter of Amusement to consider that People can suffer themselves to run such length in Absurdities, which are so shocking, that no Man can read them, but it must put him to a full Stop, and make him hesitate whether he will or no.

Leaving then these Things to Expose their Authors, as they must needs do; and to convince them that these Men are no slaves to Truth, the MERCATOR shall examine into this Exportation of Goods to Marseilles, and see what probable Quantity of our Goods are actually shipped thither from England in a Year. Let the Question, what the French do with them, be decided as it will.

It is evident, that the Goods sent to Marseilles are Enter'd at the Custom-house under the general Head of *The Streights*, a Word by which is understood the whole Mediterranean Sea.

The Ports to which the Gros of the Trade which we carry on in the Mediterranean is sent, are 1. In Spain, as Allicant, Malaga, Denia, Xevia, Carthagena and Barcelona, and our Ships often touch at all these Ports, and deliver Goods, or take Goods on Freight as they go out from

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from England, and as they return to England: But the Goods sent to these Ports are generally Enter'd in the Custom-house in the very Name of the Port they are shipped for, or under the Head of Spain as a General, as shall be made appear beyond the Power of any Cavilling Scribbler to oppose. 2. In Italy, as Genoa, Leghorn, Naples, Gallipoli, Messina in Sicily and Venice. There is some Island-Trade which is not large to Zant, Cephalonia, &c. To all these Ports, many of the Goods shipped from hence are fairly Enter'd in the Name of the particular Port they are shipped for, as shall also be made plain. 3. In Turkey, as to Smyrna, Scanderoon, Constantinople, &c. all the Goods shipped for those Ports from England are Enter'd in the Name of the Port to which they go. 4. In France, the only Port of which whither any Quantity of Goods are shipped, is that of Marseilles, which because of the Goodness of the Port, and the Privileges which it enjoys, is the Center of the Trade on that side, and excepting only Leghorn and Venice, has as much Trade as all the before-mention'd Ports of Spain and Italy, put all together.

It is true, that our Method at the Custom-house, or indeed our want of Method there, allows Goods shipped to all these Ports, Turkey excepted, to be Enter'd under the general Head as to the Streights; by which means no true Account can be given of the Trade to any of them.

But, as it can be made appear, that within a Years time above Twenty eight Ships from England have come to Marseilles wholly loaden for that Port, and we know, and the *MERCATOR* has accounted for several of them, large Ships, which have gone fully loaden from London, and yet in all that space not 50 Ton of Goods Enter'd in the Custom-house for that Port. The *MERCATOR* infers from hence, that more Goods are carried to Marseilles under the said general Head the Streights, than to any of the other Two Heads of Spain or Italy.

If they can bring any Reason to oppose this, the *MERCATOR* is ready to hear and debate it when they please; and will submit to it, if it be forcible and clear, which is more than they will do in any one thing, however demonstrated.

Upon the whole, the *MERCATOR* alledges that it is probable, and is therefore reasonable to allow, that one half of those Goods which are Enter'd at the Custom-house for the Streights, are really sent to Marseilles. The Marseilles Factor, the Thomas and Samuel, and several other Ships we know of, were wholly loaden in London for Marseilles, and were large Ships, and had great Quantities of English Woollen Manufactures on board, as was made appear in some former Papers, to which the *MERCATOR* refers, and which the Opposers saw was so plain and undeniable, that they had nothing to say to contradict it, and therefore brought that ridiculous shuffle to oppose it, (viz.) That Marseilles was a free Port, and the Goods were only brought thither as to a common Warehouse, to be Exported again to other Places; of which absurd Whimsie, enough has been said to make them ashamed, if they were capable of so much Modesty as to blush.

Now it having been made appear, as above, that the Marseilles Factor, the Thomas and Samuel, and se-

veral other Ships, did actually go for Marseilles, and were loaden thither, these Opposers would have done something considerable, if they could have found any of their Cargoes in the Custom-house Books. On the contrary, of their whole Loadings, nothing, no not one Ton of Goods, but one parcel of Pepper only, was Enter'd in our Custom-house to the Port of Marseilles; but all Enter'd under the Name of the Streights: Which is what cannot be said of any other Port or Place to which we ship Goods in the Mediterranean.

These Ships are not named because there are no other, but we have sufficiently proved that there are many other, which, within the time aforesaid, have been in the same predicament, and in particular this is an unanswerable Proof of it, which was mentioned No. 146. (viz.) That we have frequently a single Entry of some small Quantity of Goods Exported to Marseilles: We know they cannot go there without a Ship; we know that Ship cannot go there for such a small Quantity of Goods; what follows, some Ship has gone that has been concealed, and the loading of such Ship has been concealed, being Enter'd under some other denominated Voyage.

The *MERCATOR* has not room here to give an Account of the Quantity of English Goods which have been thus Exported to the Streights, one half of which are thus calculated to have gone to France, or of the Goods shipped to other Ports, such as Alicant, Malaga, Genoa, Leghorn, Venice, &c. which are not so concealed; all which prove, that the Quantity of Goods shipped to Marseilles, and concealed under the general Head of the Streights, as aforesaid, are greater than to any of the other Heads of Spain or Italy.

But a draught of these shall be prepared, and room left for every Impartial Reader who can read with Temper, and judge without Prejudice, to give his Thoughts whether these things are reasonable or no.

And if these things are so, what then have we been doing all this while, when we have been giving Estimates of the Commerce to France, and when we have called for the Custom-house Books to tell us what Goods we send to France, than which no greater and more plausible Cheat can be put upon the World? For that what with this Method in the Streights, what with the like in the Words Flanders and Germany, and what with the great Quantity of English Manufactures which always go into France thro' the Hands, as well as thro' the Country of the Hollanders, it is apparent that not one half of our Woollen Manufactures which go into France are to be found in the Custom-house Books.

To call then for the Accounts of Exports and Imports from the Custom-house Books, and to make a judgment from them of the Trade to France, is to covet being Cheated, to call for an Evidence who, we are assured beforehand, can give no true Account of the Matter.

What then is become of all your Schemes and Draughts and Sums from the Custom-house, by which the Clamours against the French Trade are supported? It is evident, the Judgment made from them is all Falacy and Cheat.

